



PATENT OFFICE INVALIDATES TIGO ENERGY, INC.'S PATENT CLAIMS



PATENT OFFICE INVALIDATES TIGO ENERGY, INC.'S PATENT CLAIMS IN RESPONSE TO SUNSPEC ALLIANCE IPR CHALLENGE

SAN JOSE, CA – January 30, 2023 – The SunSpec Alliance, the open information standards and certification organization for the Distributed Energy Resources (DER) industry, is pleased to announce that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office today invalidated key patent claims of Tigo Energy, Inc.'s [U.S. Patent No. 10,256,770](#) (the '770 patent) that Tigo has used to threaten and attack the SunSpec Alliance, SunSpec member companies, and other solar power companies.

The Patent Office's Patent Trial and Appeal Board issued a Final Written Decision in connection with the '770 patent finding that SunSpec as the "Petitioner has shown by a preponderance of the evidence that claims 12 and 13 of the '770 patent are unpatentable." This included that SunSpec had shown that a single reference, U.S. Pat. No. 8,531,055 (the "Adest '055" reference) anticipated the claims by disclosing all elements of claims 12 and 13. It also included that SunSpec had shown by a preponderance of the evidence that claims 12 and 13 were also obvious in view of two other combinations of

[Privacy & Cookies Policy](#)

Thomas Tansy, SunSpec's Chairman, said, "We are grateful for the time, effort, and expert decision of the Patent Office, recognizing the merit of SunSpec's challenges and the deficiencies of claims 12 and 13 of Tigo's '770 patent."

Tigo had argued that the defeated patent claims relate to SunSpec's Rapid Shutdown Specification and alleged that SunSpec and certain SunSpec member companies infringed the '770 patent, along with other patents. But the Patent Office's decision confirms that the purported inventions that Tigo had claimed in claims 12 and 13 of the '770 patent were actually previously disclosed by and rendered obvious by the prior art.

"At SunSpec, we create standards using well-known and proven prior art techniques to provide interoperability for SunSpec's members while avoiding intellectual property claims by other companies," Tansy explained. SunSpec had previously published a [white paper](#) and a [prior art study](#), that included some of the prior SunSpec relied on, confirming the organization's practice for its Rapid Shutdown Specification. Tigo had reached into the prior art for the now-defunct claims, which included such basic building blocks from the prior art as a controller that is basically a watchdog timer and a heartbeat signal that the controller detects to know when to reduce the power output of a solar panel as a result of a skip or other anomaly in the heartbeat signal. But because of the Patent Office's decision on these claims of the '770 patent, Tigo will not be able to assert them against any company in the future.

1

Tigo previously filed suit against two SunSpec member companies, Altenergy Power Systems, and SMA Solar Technology. After Tigo's threats, allegations, and aggressive actions, SunSpec, supported by several of its member companies, filed [IPR petitions](#) against certain claims of the '770 patent and Tigo's U.S. Patent No. 8,933,321 (th

[Privacy & Cookies Policy](#)

which it had asserted in these litigations. In a victory for SunSpec, its members, and the entire solar industry, The Patent Office confirmed the unpatentability of claims 12 and 13 of the '770 patent in its decision today.

"We are gratified by this decision, which means that these claims from this submarine patent are no longer available for Tigo to threaten SunSpec, its members, or anyone else going forward," said Tansy.

The Patent Office ultimately declined to cancel certain other challenged claims of the '770 and '321 patents in its decisions today. SunSpec is still considering its options with respect to these claims, including the possibility of appealing the decisions on those claims.

"While we are tremendously grateful with the Patent Office's decision on claims 12 and 13 of the '770 patent, we disagree with its decision on the other challenged claims and are considering all options to protect ourselves, our members, and the solar industry as a whole from Tigo's aggression," Tansy concluded.

About SunSpec Alliance

SunSpec Alliance is the open information standards and certification organization for the Distributed Energy Resources industry. SunSpec communication standards address operational requirements of solar and energy storage on the smart grid to reduce cost, promote technology innovation, and accelerate industry growth. More information at: www.SunSpec.org

Media Contact

SunSpec Alliance

Dylan Tansy

M: Dylan@SunSpec.org

T: 1 831 331-9308

[Privacy & Cookies Policy](#)

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER!

Name *

First

Last

Company *

Title *

Email *

GDPR Agreement *

☐ I consent to having this website store my submitted information so they can respond to my inquiry.

Submit

SUBSCRIBE

Name *

First

Last

Email

[Privacy & Cookies Policy](#)

Subscribe

Privacy & Cookies Policy

RECENT POSTS

Latest news from our blog

SUNSPEC & SANDIA DER CYBERSECURITY WEBINAR

Unlocking a Non-Invasive Dimension for Cybersecurity of DERs Increased cyber intrusions across the globe have prioritized cybersecurity enhancements for DERs. To this end, one of the prominent underlying cybersecurity design challenges for DERs is that the...

SUNSPEC & SANDIA DER CYBERSECURITY WEBINAR

Using artificial intelligence to provide situational awareness and determine the cyber-physical impacts on DER networks. When: Thu, January 26, 2023, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM PST Where: Online Ransomware attack and forensics on DER inverters Abstract Ransomware attacks are...

POSITION OPENING: DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES

The SunSpec Alliance is hiring a new Director of Member Services. This position became available when the previous director was promoted to Executive Director. The individual in this role will be a partner to the Executive Director on virtually all aspects of the...

[Privacy & Cookies Policy](#)

ANNOUNCEMENT: SUNSPEC ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE!

Dear Members and prospective Members! Starting April 2023, the price of Contributing Membership will increase from \$4,000 to \$5,000 per year. SunSpec is updating our annual membership fee to bring you more great services. With this change, SunSpec is expanding the...

SUNSPEC ALLIANCE WEBINAR: 2023 WORK GROUP PROJECT ROAD MAP

We will discuss the 2023 SunSpec Work Group Roadmap to recruit expert contributors for the next phase of DER standards development. When: Tue, January 31, 2023, 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM PSTWhere: Online The SunSpec Alliance, and the over 170 Contributing Members that...

[« Older Entries](#)



